

Training in the 21st Century — The Force XXI Training Program

by Lieutenant Colonel William C. Martin

As the Army moves toward Force XXI, it will face numerous challenges in determining the requirements for new doctrine, equipment, leader development, and other equally complex areas. However, the one area that presents perhaps the greatest challenge is that of training the force. The fundamental question all of us should be asking now is, how will the Army train in the 21st Century? What new training aids and devices, simulators and simulations (TADSS), and innovative training methodologies are required to train Force XXI? How will the Army transition from training today to training Force XXI? The answers to these questions are found in the Warfighter XXI.

The Chief of Staff of the Army established the Warfighter XXI to train current and future Army tactical units in virtual, constructive, and live simulations, using innovative training concepts to deliver significant improvements in combat readiness. The heart of this program is the Force XXI Training Program (FXXITP), designed as the prototype to focus on the armored/mechanized brigade initially, then expand to include light infantry, air assault, and airborne units through corps level to Force XXI in the next century.

The Force XXI Training Program includes a strategy for increasing the time the commander and staff spend training by decreasing the time they spend determining what and how to train (See Figure 1). It employs emerging technologies to turn the commander's assessment of the fighting readiness of his unit into a training program. The training program describes which tasks are to be trained to a given standard, using prescribed live, virtual, and constructive training methods. The program includes provisions to collect relevant after-action data. Training deficiencies previously not addressed, such as staff training, are addressed by combining emerging technologies with structured training. The Force XXI Training Program incorporates innovative training support packages (which include orders, overlays, scenarios, observer/controller instructions, etc) reinforced with an automated after-action review process.

The Force XXI Training Program is the mechanism for determining how the Army can effectively transition from training forces today to training forces of the future. A key objective of the program is to integrate software development, hardware development, force development, training develop-

ment, combat development, and materiel development so that how we fight and train is linked to the equipment used for that purpose. The FXXITP provides the Army with a system for ensuring the changes made across the Doctrine, Training, Leader Development, Organization, Materiel, and Soldiers (DTLOMS) are synchronized and based on the requirements to train, fight, and win, both now and in the 21st Century.

The Foundation

How will the Army train Force XXI? The answer begins with an assessment of today's training. The weaknesses identified today must serve as the start point for tomorrow's training. FXXITP began with a training assessment to identify the tasks to be trained and how well the existing TADSS meet the requirement to train these tasks. This training assessment is underway and is providing the program with essential information concerning tasks to be trained, shortfalls in existing TADSS, and requirements for new TADSS that currently don't exist. As a result of the training assessment to date, the FXXITP is already focusing on a number of critical requirements, two of which are the need for defining Critical Combat Functions (CCFs) and developing commander and staff training.

Any analysis of unit training today would show that units, given the competing operational and training requirements of today's environment, have insufficient time to train the global list of tasks for which they are responsible. CCFs provide the Army a way of focusing on the number of tasks to be trained. They are derived from the *Blueprint of the Battlefield* (TRADOC PAM 11-9) and focus on the functions essential for success on the battlefield. The FXXITP is working with the Army Research Institute on the development of the CCFs which serve as the foundation for the tasks to be trained in the program.

Commander and staff training was identified in the training assessment as a critical requirement. There are at the

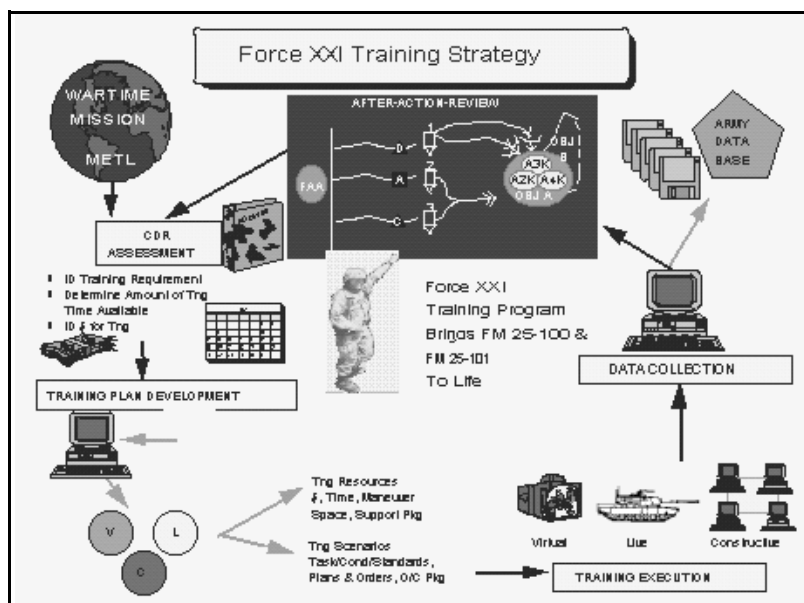


Figure 1.

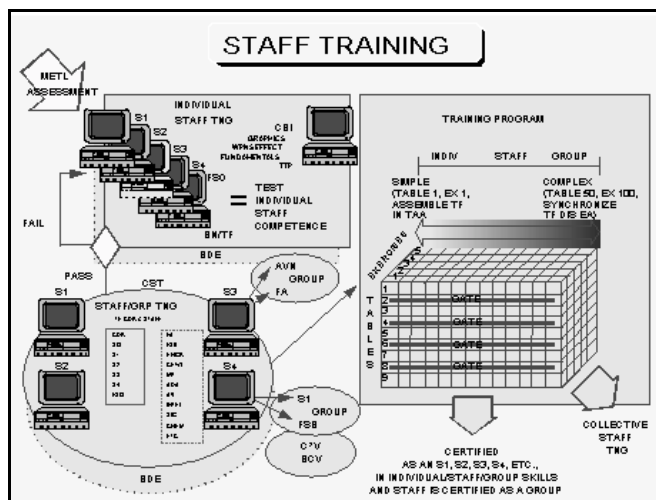


Figure 2

present time few programs to train the commander or his staff on their associated warfighting tasks. As a result, the FXXITP has dedicated a considerable emphasis towards developing a training system that evaluates and trains the commander and staff. It focuses on three areas: individual commander and staff tasks, tasks associated with operating as a part of the collective staff, and tasks associated with operating as a part of a staff group, such as the targeting or deep battle planning cell. The FXXITP commander and staff training system combines computer-based instruction with constructive and virtual training techniques. It employs the use of structured tables and exercises to train from simple to complex tasks. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the commander and staff training system.

The Transition

The training assessment identifies the tasks to be trained, shortfalls in existing TADSS, and requirements for new training strategies, methodologies, systems, and innovative training techniques. Having identified these training requirements, the next step is to implement requisite changes and evaluate the results of these changes.

The FXXITP provides the Army with a means of integrating the DTLOMS. It accomplishes this by connecting training development, materiel development, combat development, and force development within the program. The program systematically focuses the combined efforts of individuals from each of these domains toward determining changes necessary to meet identified training and warfighting requirements. It then inserts these developmental changes in DTLOMS into a highly successful, turn-key, structured training program and evaluates the pro-

gram's effectiveness. The results of this evaluation will determine follow-on requirements for improvements to the program. Should changes be required, a subsequent evaluation will follow. This experiential approach to spiral development continues until the results of the evaluation determine that the training requirements have been met.

This unique aspect of the FXXITP offers the Army two essential capabilities. First, it provides a mechanism for controlling how the Army changes. It provides a system that produces synchronized developmental changes across the DTLOMS based on identified training and warfighting requirements. Then, it evaluates these changes with soldiers through a test, fix, test method to ensure that results achieved equal results desired. Second, it provides a vehicle to transition the Army from the way it trains and fights today to how it will train and fight in the future.

The foundation for the Force XXI Training Program is the Force XXI Training Strategy. It will evolve from what we know today as the Combined Arms Training Strategy. The assessment of today's training requirements coupled with the spiral development approach of the FXXITP, will ensure that the Force XXI Training Strategy is congruent with the DTLOMS required in the 21st Century.

Conclusion

The Force XXI Training Program is a prototype for emerging and future training strategies, methodologies, systems and programs. It provides the unique opportunity to shape the future in a manner that accommodates the dynamic mission requirements and training challenges of the future. The pro-

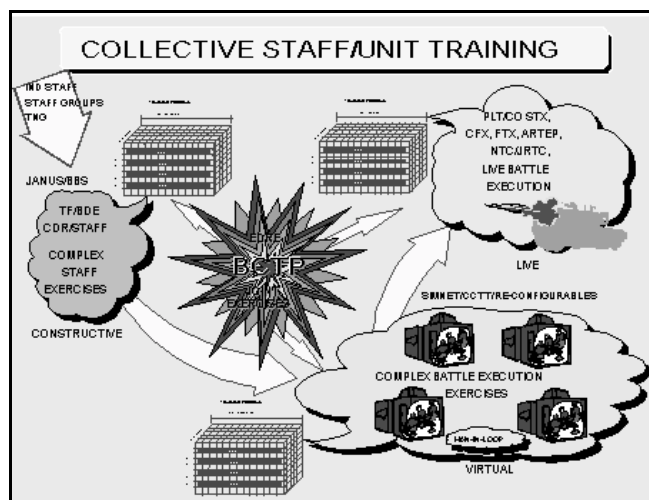


Figure 3

gram leverages technologies to provide the commander with a total training support package, from the assessment of unit capabilities to the execution of required missions. It enables commanders to rapidly identify training deficiencies and provides the means to correct them.

The FXXITP program allows commanders to train on tasks that are too complex, too dangerous, or too expensive to accomplish in a live environment. It provides the opportunity to train on mission-critical functions and tasks previously not addressed in units or CTCs. These tasks are referred to as *living tasks* because the specific tasks, conditions and standards have not been determined. This program has the inherent capability of providing structured training for commonality, while maintaining flexibility to accommodate uncertain training demands.

The Force XXI Training Program, as envisioned, will give the Army the capability to train every critical combat function and task to standard, in the most appropriate training setting, using the most appropriate training devices and tools. This capability, coupled with the ability to capture critical mission performance information on a database that allows both unit-specific and universal access, will move the Army into the 21st Century prepared to fight and win the nation's wars.

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